

## BOUT WILL BE GREATEST BATTLE OF PAST DECADE, SAYS ED SMITH

Even if It Goes Only Five Rounds, Declares Expert, It Will Be a Fight Unsurpassed By Any Since the Palmy Days of Corbett and Fitzsimmons—The Unexpected Is Most Likely to Occur and the Man Who Can Dope Out the Result Has a Chance to Get Rich.

(By Ed W. Smith)

Even if this big battle of next Thursday does not go over five rounds I am of the opinion that it will be one of the greatest of the modern heavyweight contests decided in the last decade.

I have reached this conclusion because the confidence of the two men, to all outward appearances they are in the very finest of condition and being fitted out that way there is only one conclusion to be drawn. The fight will be simply a cocker and well worth going miles to see.

While I'm not in a position to express much of an opinion as to the outcome of the affair I am free to admit that I would be a bit surprised at anything that may happen in this contest.

Johnson is ready, there isn't the slightest doubt of that.

And Flynn has been ready for several days now and looks capable of putting up the strongest kind of an argument.

In figuring this contest I would advise the dopesters to throw out that last contest between the black and the white. That was fought out in December, 1907, and resulted in a victory for Johnson in the eleventh round, though Flynn claims to this day that he wasn't decisively beaten.

He has other alibis to cover that affair. He didn't train as well as he could of because of the fact that he

had lost his wife and child but a short time before that and fought simply because he needed the money.

Flynn claims, too, that he knew little or nothing about fighting at that time but in the four years intervening has become a sure-enough capable gamemaster, knowing well all of the nice little tricks of the game and being well versed now in all angles that go to make up a thorough going candidate for the highest honors in the business.

Even if one accepts these statements for only half of what they are worth they amount to something and when one figures that Johnson surely is no better at this time than he was then, if he is as good, it is possible to figure that the fireman has a grand little fighting chance of upsetting the wonderful colored star in this encounter.

Those who have come in contact with Flynn daily during the last two or three weeks at the training camp could not but become infected with the really superlative confidence of the man from Colorado. In an experience with athletes covering a period of over 25 years I cannot remember a man who was so brutally frank in his statements about the outcome of a contest. Flynn simply bristles with it and it is the kind that permeates the air around him. To associate with Flynn for a few days

one becomes imbued with this same feeling of confidence in Flynn that Flynn carries himself.

And to keep away from Johnson for a little while the Flynn confidence becomes an obsession.

Naturally there is a little bit of an awakening when one goes to Oldtown and looks over the champion.

Johnson is confident, too, superlatively like Flynn, but it is a confidence that is expressed and displayed in a vastly different manner. Johnson is champion and he is champion every move and word and look. He has all of the arrogance and kinglike bearing of a champion, but he doesn't force it upon one the way Flynn does. There is a sort of sneering contempt in the Johnson method doing his training, a hint that underneath all of the smiling there is a grim determination to simply slay this upstart who dares dispute the honors with the leader of his profession.

Johnson has all of the sneering indifference of a man who is merely going through the motions of training. But take my word for it, this champion is training at faithfully and as completely as he ever trained for any contest since he began to attract the highest attention as a pugilist.

The colored man is a wonderful roadworker and does most of his conditioning before the experts get a chance to see him. Hence the feeling that the indifferent manner in which he goes about his gymnasium stunts shows an almost criminal carelessness. Yet when one comes look over this giant, this perfect model of fighting skill and judge of the points that go to make up a well conditioned athlete one cannot find much fault.

Further than this the scales have shown right along that Johnson is already down to fighting weight. He touched below 214 pounds during the past week and needs but a half dozen more workouts to render unto him the finishing touches.

Flynn has told me that he intends to put up a cautious battle and that

he will force the champion to make some of the pace. I have seen many a hot-headed man like Flynn plan a careful battle before—and forget his plan as soon as he is stung or as he finds himself in trouble.

The Pueblo fireman is a rusher pure and simple, and rush he must if he is to show himself off at his best. "I boxed once and got my head knocked off," Flynn told me the other day. "Since that time I've been fighting."

That tells the whole story of the Flynn system of doing things in the ring. He isn't a boxer, never was and never can be. He is a fighter, every inch of him, and when the fireworks are touched off in the ring next Thursday Flynn will, I'm sure, be there with a display of his old style of milling.

Against a man of Johnson's length of arm Flynn would be battered into a pulp in six or eight rounds if he contented himself with standing off at long range and trying to pepper his rangy antagonist with some straight punches. He simply MUST go in with the idea of keeping as close to Johnson as possible and try to reach his midsection with some heavy wallops.

Should Flynn be able to sting Johnson in the early stages and get him a little tired I'm sure he will worry him a whole lot. The world knows that Johnson isn't a quick finisher and that he must take his time to the completion of any job. That's one reason why I do not look for a quick finish. Flynn cannot finish Johnson quickly, I'm sure, because of the wonderful defensive tactics of the negro. But of this I am morally sure. The contest is going to be a corker, every inch of it, and the fans that miss it will have something to regret.

"I'm bid \$100 for the Jack Johnson end; what will you give me for Flynn?"

This was the burden of the song in the betting commissioner's quarters last night when the first real betting began on the big battle of next Thursday afternoon.

John O. Talbott, of Denver, is doing the splicing himself and stirring up considerable interest in the betting end of the affair. He was asked to place one commission of \$300 on Flynn at better than 2 to 1 and stoutly declined to do so despite the fact that the Flynn man was a personal friend of his.

"There will be nothing better than 2 to 1 at any time from now on and if this Flynn sentiment continues to grow at the pace it has been showing for the past two weeks I wouldn't be surprised to see an even shorter figure than that," Mr. Talbott said in discussing the prices on his blackboard.

"There is no use asking for better because 2 to 1 is a good price at this time. I predict that it won't last either, although the real Flynn money hasn't begun to show up yet. This is absolutely definite, and not subject to chance in the least."

This statement was considerable of a surprise to the betting men here who had expected to get some Flynn money on at 3 to 1. There is a lot of money in Mr. Talbott's hands to go on Flynn at certain prices, but now that he has definitely named 2 to 1 as the real opening price doubtless a lot of this will be released at the new odds.

Jim Flynn already has been placed upon the diet that he changes to a week before an important contest. Chic Coleman, his cook, who has prepared every morsel of food that the Pueblo man has consumed in the past eight weeks is making the final preparations for the big battle and believes that he has Flynn's digestive apparatus in the best condition to withstand a grueling contest.

"Jim and I have made a special effort this time to get in the finest of shape on the food end of the game," Coleman said. "Never what might be called a heavy eater, Jim is taking special care this time to see to it that food is most carefully prepared and that he gets nothing but what will

tend to increase his stamina and endurance.

"This pair of chickens here will be the final offering the day of the contest and about 11 o'clock July 4 one of them will be broiled for Jim's dinner. Already he has cut out the potatoes to a great extent, eating but one a day and that baked. The meat diet will be continued, but he will cut even this down a bit from now on. All of his bread will be toasted and as for drinking water, it will be cut down gradually. Now he drinks about four ordinary glasses a day but will begin tomorrow to taper off on this. One cup of coffee in the morning is the only other fluid he takes."

"I'm preparing some bouillon now that will be made into demiglace and a small quantity of this will equal many pounds of beer. This he will take twice a day up to the day of the contest."

Flynn dashed off his usual quota of work during the day and had another banner crowd in attendance, the scene around the camp resembling a vast picnic, so crowded with rigs and autos was the parking place in front of the camp.

Flynn announced to the gathered newspapermen that he weighed 197 pounds in the morning after his road workout and when the afternoon's stunts were at an end he again stepped on the platform and showed a flat 190 pounds.

"It's hard to say how this battle will be fought out," Flynn said after he had finished. "Of one thing you may be certain. If the success of the fight from a fighting viewpoint, depends upon what I may do in the ring you can bet I'll be right on top of him every inch of the way."

"And let me tell you another thing. I ever that contest goes into the twentieth round I'll win it beyond the shadow of a doubt. And I may win it a great deal sooner, you never can tell."

The experts now here continue to

be favorably impressed with the appearance of the fireman and believe there is no further doubt that he is capable of giving the famous colored man a terrific battle, even if he does not last ten rounds. But it is generally conceded that the struggle will surely go twice that far.

Johnson could not work yesterday because there was nobody to box with, the entire camp being laid up for repairs but the champion himself. As a result Jack did an extra allowance of six miles on the road during the cool of the evening, going out for three miles and sprinting and walking back alternately.

"I'm down now as low as I want to get and am a little surprised that this is the case so far in advance of the battle," Johnson said. "I don't want to be on edge more than a day or so, hence I'll have to let up a little. I'm fine right now and have little more to do to keep in tiptop shape."

Promoter Jack Curley closed last night for rain and liability insurance with Lloyd's. He has insured the house for \$30,000 against a half inch of rain. If this amount falls the company will have to pay Curley the money. The insurance people also indemnify the club here against all personal injuries in case of accident at the arena, etc.

The news that Al Paizer had knocked Wells out was received here with considerable surprise. Paizer is expected on to see this contest and personally challenge the winner next Thursday. The Iowa man telegraphed to Curley ten days ago that he surely would dispose of Wells via the knockout route and that he would immediately leave for Las Vegas to see what happened in the championship contest.

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